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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/085,854

02/27/2002

Ronald Dean Smith

1691

7590

02/19/2004

MILLER PATENT SERVICES
2500 DOCKERY LANE
RALEIGH, NC 27606

EXAMINER

BENNETT, GEORGE B

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2859

DATE MAILED: 02/19/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/085,854

Applicant(s)

SMITH ET AL.

Examiner

G. Bradley Bennett

Art Unit

2859

AW

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 January 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 March 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 5, 9, 10, 11 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harris in view of Shurtleff.

3. Harris discloses the invention substantially as claimed where: **30** is a compartment with angular graduations **66**; member **20** is an indicator needle pivotally suspended that moves according to gravitational forces; and **40** is a viscous fluid, which inherently includes glycerin oil. However, Harris does not disclose a magnetic base as claimed. Shurtleff discloses how a magnetic means **11** may be attached to the base of a slope measurement instrument for the purpose of attaching the instrument to an object to be measured. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the magnetic base as taught by Shurtleff in conjunction with slope measurement device of Harris for the purpose of attaching the Harris device to an object to be measured.

4. Claims 6-8, 12-16 and 18-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harris and Shurtleff as applied to claim 5 above, and further in view of Dougherty.

5. Regarding claims 6, 18, 21 and 22, Harris and Shurtleff disclose the invention substantially as claimed. However, neither discloses an adjustable pointer as claimed. Dougherty discloses an adjustable pointer for use with a slope measurement instrument for the purpose of recording a measured slope. Therefore, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to use a pointer as taught by Dougherty in conjunction with the known device for the purpose of recording a measured slope the the Harris device.

6. Regarding claims 7, 8, 12-16, 19 and 20, Harris and Shurtleff disclose the invention substantially as claimed. Official Notice is taken that *any* known means can be used for attaching the pointer of Dougherty to the device of Harris, including the old and well-known wing nut as claimed. Furthermore, the indicator must be attached to the compartment as claimed since it must be attached in a manner that permits it to be located adjacent the indicia of the measuring device. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the claimed means for attaching the needle of Dougherty to the device of Harris for the purpose of allowing a needle to be fixed at a specific location to indicate a measured slope.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

8. Applicant's arguments filed 14 JAN 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The applicant argues that the instant invention is different than the prior art. Although the devices are not exactly the same, the prior art discloses the invention as *claimed*, as outlined in the paragraphs above.

9. Please also note that the substitute specification filed 21 MAR 2003 has been entered.

10. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to G. Bradley Bennett whose telephone number is 703.308.1284. Please note that the examiner's number will be changed to

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571.272.2237 on or about 10 FEB 2004. The examiner can normally be reached on M-TH 8:30-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Diego F.F. Gutierrez can be reached on 703.308.3875. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


G. Bradley Bennett
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2859

gbb
9 FEB 2004